

Great Start Collaborative
Competitive Great Start Readiness Program
Endorsement Guidelines
For 2012/2013

Background and Overview

Legislation within the State School Aid Act requires that *"A district receiving funds under section 32d shall submit a preapplication, in a form and manner prescribed by the department, by a date specified by the department in the immediately preceding state fiscal year. The preapplication shall include a comprehensive needs assessment and community collaboration plan, which is endorsed by the local great start collaborative and is part of the community's great start strategic plan that, includes, but is not limited to, great start readiness program and head start providers..."* These guidelines and the associated Endorsement Form are intended to support collaboration among Great Start Collaboratives (GSCs), Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) as GSRP grantees and those who deliver the program

The overall purpose of a GSC is to create a single, interconnected, intertwined network of public and private programs, services, and supports, working together in a community to accomplish better results for young children and families. The GSC's membership is comprised of public and private organizations, businesses, philanthropic organizations, parents of young children, and other key community leaders that serve young children and their families. All GSCs have developed comprehensive three-year strategic plans focused on the five Great Start components: pediatric and family health, social and emotional health, child care and early education, parenting leadership, and family support.

When implementing priorities identified in Great Start strategic plans, one role of GSCs is to assist agencies and organizations to leverage funds or services to support an identified community need. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) funds applicants through ISDs to implement quality preschool experiences for at-risk four-year-old children in Michigan. As part of GSRP funding requests, applicants must assess community need through the proposal application.

Process Toward Endorsement

Each GSC works to bring all providers into real collaboration. When a strong partnership is developed, the completion of the form is just the last step in a process in which the early childhood community has worked together to maximize preschool slots for the local area.

Role/Responsibility of Each Applicant

- Collect and aggregate data for the applicant's catchment area.
- Seek the support of the ISD through the Early Childhood Contact (ECC) and share the completed application with the ECC.
- The ECC seeks the endorsement from the local GSC to receive funding for services in FY 2013.

Role/Responsibility of the GSC

- Receive need and capacity data and GSC Endorsement Forms from each applicant.
- Implement local process for review and endorsement which may include requesting changes to the data to reflect corrections.
- Request coordination with regional early care and learning efforts (this cannot be required in order to give the endorsement). (Example: a community may need additional School-Day slots but the grantee is proposing all Part-Day slots. The group may ask for an explanation of the applicant's choice, but cannot require a change in the program model the grantee will offer in order to give the endorsement.)
- Sign each GSC Endorsement Form and return it to the applicant. It is recommended the GSC scan and e-mail the signed form, if necessary, in order to assist with submission to MDE.

GSC Endorsement Form Descriptions

As outlined above, the GSC must complete the Endorsement Form for the applicant and check one of two levels as defined below. The GSC should select the level that best describes both the Need and Capacity and the collaborative effort made by the applicant.

REVIEW: The GSC has reviewed the Need and Capacity. This designation acknowledges the GSC's awareness of the Need and Capacity, but does not comment on its accuracy or the plan for the provision of GSRP by the grantee. This designation may be used when the applicant provides insufficient time for review of the proposal.

ENDORSEMENT: The GSC assures the proposal builds the program/service capacity needed in the community and is part of an integrated delivery system. The GSC "endorses" the applicant that partners with the GSC in strategic efforts to provide high-quality preschool, fostering school readiness and life success for children residing within the GSC region.